

Rockport Harbor Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting of January 15, 2014

Meeting Held at Rockport Library at 5PM

Present: Chairman Skip Montello; Vice Chairman Chris Murch; Fred Hillier; Kevin Carrigan;
Larry Stepenuck; Phil Crotty, Secretary (Quorum was Present)

Absent: None

Also Present: Harbormaster Rosemary Lesch

Other Attendees: Steve Fritch, Dana Jorgensson; Toby Arsenian

Chairman Montello opened the meeting and welcomed guests. Crotty advised members regarding expense reimbursement form needing to be signed for 2104, and that was passed around and signed.

Chairman called for motion to approve December 2103 minutes. Stepenuck objected to minutes and presented his typed amendment that was passed around to members. Chairman Montello said he thought the proposed amendment went beyond the scope of what was discussed in December. The committee discussed and was divided. Members stated they want to approve minutes before being posted on website. Chairman explained that he understands the Town administration wants the minutes in five days. Guest Jorgensson explained the procedure in Gloucester. Chairman directed Crotty to contact Town Administrator and get right procedure that also conforms to State open meeting laws. Motion was made by Stepenuck to incorporate his amendment into December minutes; motion seconded by Murch; Motion failed. Then Motion made by Stepenuck to incorporate his proposed amendment into present January 2014 minutes; Crotty seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The Stepenuck addition follows at end.

Chairman then turned the meeting to agenda items. There followed a discussion about Harbors and Floats, Chapter 9A, of the Town Bylaws and a proposed amendment drafted in 2008 entitled "Trap Storage Area and Shack Waiting List and Assignment Procedure." The Chairman noted that he had received a complaint from a resident about Pigeon Cove storage disorder, and that he wanted to reply to the resident that the HAC Committee had finalized a storage program for Pigeon Cove. Harbormaster Lesch reported that the Police Department, Sgt. Tibert, handles complaints under the Harbors and Floats section of the Town Code at this time. There was also mention of the fact that certain rules and regulations are set forth in the contracts for Granite Pier storage and Pigeon Cove storage, and also there are written procedures for Granite Pier, and that the Committee should include them all as part of its current review. The Chairman asked secretary Crotty to get copies of the documents from the Town Administrators (following the meeting Crotty sent an e-mail requesting the documents to the Town Administrator and the secretary to the Administrator e-mailed back a number of documents, which Crotty photo-copied and will be distributed at February 2014 meeting for discussion.) Attendee Arsenian suggested that any proposed bylaws be drafted in time for the Board of Selectmen cut-off for bylaw revisions for 2014.

Turning to the proposed Granite pier Extension, the Chairman reported that one feasibility proposal had come in under \$5,000, and that a second was expected any day, and that a third was also coming. He had met this day with the third company at Granite Pier. He advised that next

Tuesday evening the 21st he and Crotty were going to the Town Selectmen meeting at their request to advise about the proposal, and that info packets were already distributed to them. The Chairman said he would prefer that the BOS finance the proposal out of the town budget rather than the HAC committee approaching the CPC committee for funding. The Chairman said he was not totally in favor of the project, and that in his view it would need external money to go forward. Attendee Jorgesson stated that the City of Gloucester just received money for major harbor project from Mass. DOT, and she offered to send info to the Chairman. Harbormaster Lesch stated that large sums of money are being distributed for harbor projects by the State. The Chairman said Rockport should try for such funds. The Chairman also said an application to CPC would be for the Open Space category. Stepenuck then stated there are problems with the proposed project, and the Chairman requested him to put together a list of such problems, which he is doing. The Chairman pointed out the project is not just about seventy or so additional moorings and any forum discussion should be more broad based. Stepenuck stated that Metcalf and Eddy had spent \$800,000 on a certain engineering study, and that some people want to move all commercial boats out of the harbor.

With the permission of the Chairman Attendee Arsenian raised an additional matter with the HAC committee. He pointed out that the owner of the Tool Company has filed an amended permit with the Conservation Committee. The applicant has persuaded that committee to accept an amended plan that will cost the town hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost revenue. Furthermore he said the new plan chisels the public out of public access, and that the path should be along the entire bulkhead. There will be a homeowner association to handle floats and storage. He pointed out the harbor view is an asset of the town. He passed around sketches. He stated that the Board of Selectmen has no handle on the Tool Co. project, but they will schedule a hearing and the HAC will be asked to comment. Stepenuck asked if the Chapter 91 application was still open, and Arsenian said yes but DEP is very understaffed. The Chairman said the HAC committee's purpose is to advise, and he looks forward to a presentation, and he will ask the Town Administrator. Harbormaster Lesch said the harbormasters just received the package. Stepenuck said NEPA should get involved but Arsenian said NEPA is not interested.

The Chairman asked Harbormaster Lesch for an update. She reported that Old Harbor repairs are coming along beautifully. Rockport Harbor problems are in design and will hopefully be expedited; and that the day marker that disappeared from the harbor is a Coast Guard responsibility and she sent photos to CG within minutes of it being washed away. Pigeon Cove is receiving FEMA dollars for repairs, as reported in the newspaper. Bearskin Neck is being upped in priority for repairs. Back Beach is being worked on by the DPW. Stepenuck and Hillier commented on the effect of storms.

The Chairman noted the time as 1802 and entertained a motion to adjourn. Motion made by the Chairman and seconded by Carrigan. All voted aye. (See Stepenuck submission to minutes below)

Proposed additions/corrections to the "draft minutes" for the December 18, 2013 Rockport HAC meeting.

Presented by Lawrence P. Stepenuck., M.C.P.

In the fifth paragraph beginning; "Stepenuck pointed out....", there should be some of the points raised by Stepenuck added to the minutes to include the following.

Proposing to spend public money on an engineering study for a multi-million dollar project proposal that is over forty years old is ill advised and far too narrow in focus. Before making such a proposal there should be as broad a base of discussion and in-put as possible, (i.e., holding a number of well advertised public workshops and solicit input from all interested and potentially affected publics/persons). Although the concept of an expanded breakwater at Granite Pier may have some merit, it is premature to move ahead in a rushed manner using an outdated study, (45 + years old), and less than an hour of public discussion by this committee. It is not just a question of would it be nice to have more mooring space or ocean access, there are major issues associated with adjacent land use, disruption or elimination to existing marine related uses and practices. There is also many more base line concerns that will be not given their just consideration if we, (the committee), rush to spending time and public monies on any such proposal at this time.

The last sentence of the same paragraph mentioned above should be expanded to more accurately reflect what I stated as to my desire that we as a committee focus on the safety, security, and function of all of our existing harbors as well as expanding public input to the Chapter 91 process, (we as a committee had already agreed to discuss these issues), before moving ahead with a specific project proposal.